

A NEW BUTTERFLY OF THE GENUS OGYRIS (Lepidoptera Rhopalocera) FROM WHYALLA, S. AUST.

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SUMMARY

A new race of *Ogyris barnardi* Miskin, named *delphis*, is described from Whyalla, South Australia, adding another to the short list of butterflies living in the arid regions of Australia.

INTRODUCTION.

Mr. F. Erasmus Wilson of Melbourne recently sent me a series of five examples of an interesting new race of the rather rare Barnard's Azure Butterfly (*Ogyris barnardi* Miskin 1890).

Existence of subspecific modifications previously had not been noticed in this species, of which the type example was taken on the Dawson River in East Central Queensland some time prior to 1890. It was later taken at Emerald, at Milmerran, and at Clermont, all places in the same general area of Queensland; it also occurs on Stradbroke Island, off Brisbane.

There are specimens before me from Clermont dated 10th and 24th September, 1922.

A male and female taken at Brewarrina in Western New South Wales between 21st September and 7th October, 1925, are also available but these prove to be different and seem to be related to the form about to be described from Whyalla, South Australia.

OGYRIS BARNARDI DELPHIS subsp. nov.

Male. Wings above very dull purple, with relatively wide black outer margin, widest near apex of

forewing; inner margin of hindwing gray with scattered white scales; and a few bright blue ones; forewings below grayish-black, broadly suffused with grayish-white scales at the base of cell, along costa, and on apical fourth of wing; five blue-tinged white transverse bars in cell; a line of black bars separating dark basal from light apical, portion of wing at three-fourths; these show a sinuate arrangement; hindwings grayish-white with narrow black margined brown markings; ciliae alternately white with black scales, and black. Length of forewing 16 mm; expanse 34 mm.

Female. Wings above dull bluish-purple with broad black margins; a particularly dark patch of scales on forewing near costa at three-fourths, extending to vein M.; wings below similar to male, the outermost white bar on forewing relatively large. Length of forewing 17 mm; expanse 37 mm.

Locality, South Australia: Whyalla, November 4, 1951, taken by Mr. E. T. Smith (Holotype, a male, and three paratype males in collection of F. E. Wilson; allotype I.19098 in South Australia Museum presented by F. E. Wilson). New South Wales: Brewarrina 21 Sept.-7 Oct. 1925, two paratypes, in South Australian Museum, 5 males 2 females examined.

The type pair were taken together at Whyalla, in company with *Ogyris hewitsoni meridionalis*, flying near mistletoes growing on mulga (*Acacia aneura*).

This race is small (males expanding 34-38 mm.) and distinctive



Top row:—*Ogyris b. delphis* Tindale. Whyalla, South Australia, 4 November, 1951; left male, right female; upper side of type pair.

Second row:—*Ogyris b. delphis* undersides.

Third row:—*Ogyris b. delphis* Tindale, Brewarrina, New South Wales, September 1 to October 7, 1925; left male, right female; undersides.

Fourth row:—*Ogyris b. barnardi* Miskin, Clermont, Queensland; left, male, September 10, 1922, and right, female, September 24, 1922; undersides.

because of its dark purple colour; I was at first inclined to consider it a species separate from *O. barnardi*. However it is allopatric; it has many features in common with typical *barnardi*; and specimens from Brewarrina, an intermediate locality, which I identify with the new race, show a slight trend towards *O. barnardi* in such characters as size, and wing colour.

In *O. b. delphis* the black margins of the wings in the male are wider, and in the female slightly narrower than in *O. b. barnardi*; because of the darker purple colour of the rest of the wings the black is less conspicuous. The forewings beneath have the series of short white-margined black bars extending from costa at three-fourths towards tornus crenellated or stag-

gered, whereas in *O. b. barnardi* they tend to run in a virtually straight line with, at most, a single departure from regularity at about the middle of the length in the female. The silvery-white bars of the forewings below are much larger in the new race than in *O. b. barnardi*. In the female of the last named the dark patch at apex of cell on forewing above extends to vein Cu_{1a} with a few traces only of purple scales between it and vein M_3 , whereas in *O. b. delphis* female the dark patch does not go below vein M_3 . In the single Brewarrina female the purple extends to vein M_1 .

On the indications available the probable distribution of the race *Ogyris b. barnardi* is along the eastern side of the Great Dividing Range from Central Queensland south to Stradbroke Island.

The race *O. b. delphis* ranges from New South Wales west of the Dividing Range to near the

Head of Spencer Gulf in South Australia.

The nymotypic race is taken in savannah woodland country which has a rainfall of between 20 and 40 inches. It has been reported as feeding on a mistletoe parasitic upon wattles (*Acacia*).

Annual rainfall in the areas where *O. b. delphis* has been taken lies between 10 and 15 inches; both Whyalla and Brewarrina lie on the southern and wetter fringe of the great mulga scrub formation of our arid central deserts. Since the mulga scrub areas extend across to Western Australia the species should be searched for also in parts of Western Australia, such as near the Murchison River and the Fraser Range, where occur similar environmental conditions.

The present discovery adds another to the short but growing list of butterflies found to be living in the more arid portions of Australia.

EXCURSION TO HENLEY SOUTH

23rd August, 1952.

Despite rough weather a small party of Naturalists spent an interesting afternoon amongst sandhills near West Beach.

New records for the locality included the ornamental Castor Oil Plant, *Ricinus communis* L., and the ephemeral *Periaria debilis* G. Forst. (under bushes), while a clump of some bulbous plant in the locality suggested *Homeria collina* Vent. but this requires confirmation. A solitary specimen of the Buckthorn, *Rhamnus alaternus* L., was found in scrub there—the writer was interested to hear the name "Blowfly Tree" applied to this old hedge plant. Members of the party collected, in flower, specimens of *Leucopogon parviflorus*, *Senecio lautus*,

Arctotis stoechadifolia and *Acacia sophorae*—the latter shrub dominated the more windswept dunes in the area.

L. D. Williaums.

ERRATA

Vol. 26, Nos. 3 and 4—

Page 42 line 21 (2nd col.) for *Lepidosperma* read *Leptospermum*.

Page 61 line 1 (1st col.) for *Glossidia* read *Glossodia*.

To further the preservation of our flora and fauna, the Committee decided to forward a donation of £10/10/- to Mr. Bellchambers at Humbug Scrub, to further the excellent work he is doing.